

Message Text

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14-11

ACTION ARA-10

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H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8186

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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TAGS: PFOR, BR, PO

SUBJECT: ARRIVAL OF GENERAL SPINOLA IN BRAZIL

REF: BRASILIA 1937

SUMMARY: CALLING THE ADMISSION GENERAL SPINOLA TO
BRAZIL "A CLOSED EPISODE", FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES HAVE
GIVEN ASSURANCES TO THE PRESS THAT THE INCIDENT WILL HAVE
NO HARMFUL EFFECT ON BRAZILIAN-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS. THE
SAME SOURCES ARE QUOTED AS BEING MORE CONCERNED OVER
GROWING RUMORS OF THE DISMISSAL OF FOREIGN MINISTER
SOARES. THE ASYLEES HAVE ISSUED A STATEMENT IN BUENOS AIRES CLAIMING
THAT THE MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT WAS CAUSED BY A COMMUNIST
PLAN TO "ELIMINATE" MODERATE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERS.
END SUMMARY.

1. FORMER PRESIDENT ANTONIO SPINOLA AND HIS FIFTEEN COMPANIONS,
GRANTED ASYLUM IN BRAZIL ON MARCH 15, ARRIVED
IN SAO PAULO THAT SAME DAY TO TAKE UP TEMPORARY RESIDENCE
IN A HOTEL. IN A STATEMENT DRAFTED AND ISSUED IN THE
NAME OF AMJOR CARLOS SIMAS IN BUENOS AIRES ON MARCH 14,
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THE EXILES CLAIM TO REPRESENT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE

OFFICERS OF THE PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES, WHO, IN FIGHTING FOR "THE COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROGRAM PRESENTED TO THE NATION ON APRIL 25", HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO "IMPLACABLE PERSECUTION, RANGING FROM DISMISSAL FROM COMMAND TO VEILED THREATS OF PRISON." THE STATEMENT CLAIMS THAT ON MARCH 10, "A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP" OF THESE OFFICERS WAS INFORMED THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY, ASSISTED BY THE RADICAL GROUPS LUAR AND "PAGADAS REVOLUTIONARIAS" WAS PLOTTING TO "ELIMINATE" 500 OFFICERS AND 1000 CIVILIANS, " MOSTLY LINKED TO THE ECONOMY OF THE NATION," TO TAKE PLACE ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 12-13 UNDER THE CODE NAME "THE GREAT EASTER MASSACRE". THE LIST OF PROPOSED VICTIMS, ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT, WAS HEADED BY GENERAL SPINOLA AND HAD THE APPROVAL OF PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES, BRIG. SARAIVA DE CARVALHO OF COPCON AND PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES. BASING THEIR ACTIONS ON THIS INFORMATION, THE STATEMENT CONTINUES, THE GROUP REQUIRED GENERAL SPINOLA TO GO TO TANCOS AIR FORCE BASE FOR HIS OWN SECURITY, AND LAUNCHED THE MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, OFFICIAL SOURCES DESCRIBE THE ADMISSION OF SPINOLA TO BRAZIL AS "A CLOSED INCIDENT" AND EXPECT THAT THE GRANTING OF ASYLUM WILL HAVE NO HARMFUL EFFECT ON RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL. THE LONG DELAY IN GRANTING ASYLUM TO SPINOLA-OFFICIALLY BECAUSE HE HAD NOT INITIATED A FORMAL REQUEST THROUGH BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS-- WAS EXPLAINED PARTLY AS AN INDICATION OF BRAZIL'S PIQUE, OVER THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT'S PRECIPITATE ACTION IN SENDING SPINOLA TO BRAZIL WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION. THE OFFICIAL SOURCES ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE GRANTING OF ASYLUM TO SPINOLA BY BRAZIL WAS ADVANTAGEOUS TO LISBON SINCE, IN ONE VERSION, "IN ANY EUROPEAN CAPITAL HE WOULD BE CLOSE TO THE PORTUGUESE POLITICAL GAME, AND WOULD BE ABLE TO ACT IN IT, EVEN FROM OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY". THE PRESS EMPHASIZES THAT SPINOLA WAS REQUIRED TO SIGN A WRITTEN AGREEMENT NOT TO UNDERTAKE POLITICAL ACTIONS WHILE IN BRAZIL.

3. THE PRESS ALSO CLAIMS, AGAIN REFERRING TO OFFICIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOURCES, THAT BRAZIL IS LESS CONCERNED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SPINOLA ASYLUM THAN OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF THE DISMISSAL OF FOREIGN MINISTER SOARES. ACCORDING TO O GLOBO, THIS LATTER MOVE "COULD HVE AN EFFECT ON THE CONDUCT OF THE PRESENT PORTUGUESE-BRAZILIAN DIALOGUE." CRIMMINS

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